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COVER MODEL

APRIL CHERYSE

MISS KANDY SUMMER 2026

Orange County, California continues to deliver the finest bombshells.

RED, WHITE, & BLUE TRIBUTE

JENNIFER IRENE

She's the picture of the American Spirit. If Jennifer sees something she wants, she puts it into American Drive and goes and gets it.

NIKKI LEIGH

A B-29 bomber, a General's car from WWII, a helicopter from Vietnam, a troop carrier from the Korean war, a C-141 Starlifter from the Vietnam war. We time-travelled with Nkki.

LAUREN SMITTY

We discovered Lauren at Miss Tropic Beauty World Finals in Las Vegas where she finished in the Top 10. Since then, it's been "Lauren, let's shoot!"

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KANDY AMERICANA 250

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JESSICA HALL

She's been on the cover of KANDY so many times we've lost count. And each cover feature is as different as the wide spectrum of KANDY girls. Here's a look book at her KANDY Krush of the Year American Tribute feature.

KANDY & BLONDES

SHERA BECHARD

She's from the Great White North - Canada. She's a Playboy Playmate. She invented Frisky Friday. And she's a past KANDY cover girl.

CIARA PRICE

We've had a crush on Ciara since she popped up on the red carpet of one our charity events. She also is a Playboy Playmate and KANDY cover girl.

MARISSA VICTORIA

Some girls just know how to make the camera come alive. Our first MISS KANDY of the Year Marissa is one of those models.

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KANDY AMERICANA

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Learn about the Revolutionary Battles that forged this great nation.

AMERICA'S MAJESTY
Stay home this Summer and explore America. Start with the might Mississippi pictured above.

KANDY AMERICANA

ROAD TRIP
There's so much to see in America that we broke it into two parts. Start with the Grand Canyon pictured above.

WHEELS UP
The only way to explore America is in a classic American car with the top down and a hot KANDY girl by your side.

As America celebrates 250 years of freedom this year, I think back to our 200th. American patriotism is part of my family heritage. Growing up in Sunnyside Queens, New York, our family would trek to Manhattan's Battery Park every July 4th to watch the fireworks. As kids growing up in the 70s in NYC, there were only two reasons to venture into Manhattan, the fireworks on the 4th of July and the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Our family was on the twice-a-year Manhattan pilgrimage program. For those unaware of the history of NYC in the 1970s, it was perilous, much like Los Angeles, Chicago, and San Francisco today, cities crumbling under the policies of Democrat mayors and city councils. My dad worked two, sometimes three, jobs to save enough so we could move to the suburbs in '77 and escape the crime of NYC. But, the year before we moved was the most memorable 4th of July of my youth, America's bicentennial celebration – July 4th, 1976.

American history was important in our family. My dad had seen to it. The bicentennial celebration of July 4th, 1976, in New York City was unlike any in our history, prior and since. A collection of the tallest ships around the world filled New York harbor. The countries they represented included Colombia, Chile, Poland, Denmark, Norway, Italy, Germany, Spain, the Soviet Union, Argentina, Romania, Japan, Portugal, and the US. Accompanying them were 113 supporting vessels from around the world as well.

July 4th,1976 was a long day for the Kuchler clan. We were up early so Dad could find a parking spot, as well as a place for a front-row view of the boats sailing through the harbor. I recalled we were against a railing, with a Statue of Liberty view. Dad had done his homework ahead of the parade. As tall ships sailed by, he would offer brief tidbits on each.

Have a great summer, escape your digital world, and see the real world.

Ron Kuchler

Ron Kuchler

Editor in Chief

Kandy MAGAZINE

Editor in Chief
Ron Kuchler

Managing Editor
David Packo

Editor at Large
Mike Prado

Cover Credits
Photo by Mike Prado

Contributing Photographers
Mario Barberio, Mike Prado, Thuy Tran, Volker Fleck

Stock Imagery
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Contact Us
Kandy Enterprises LLC
7260 W. Azure Dr Suite 140-639
Las Vegas, NV 89130
www.kandymag.com
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General Inquiries - info@kandymag.com
Letters to The Editor - letters@kandymag.com
Copyright - legal@kandymag.com
Photographer Inquiries - kandy@kandymag.com
Support - support@kandymag.com

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Photo Volker Fleck

KANDY Cover Girl March 2015
Playboy Playmate
Frisky Friday Creator
Born: Kapuskasing, Ontario

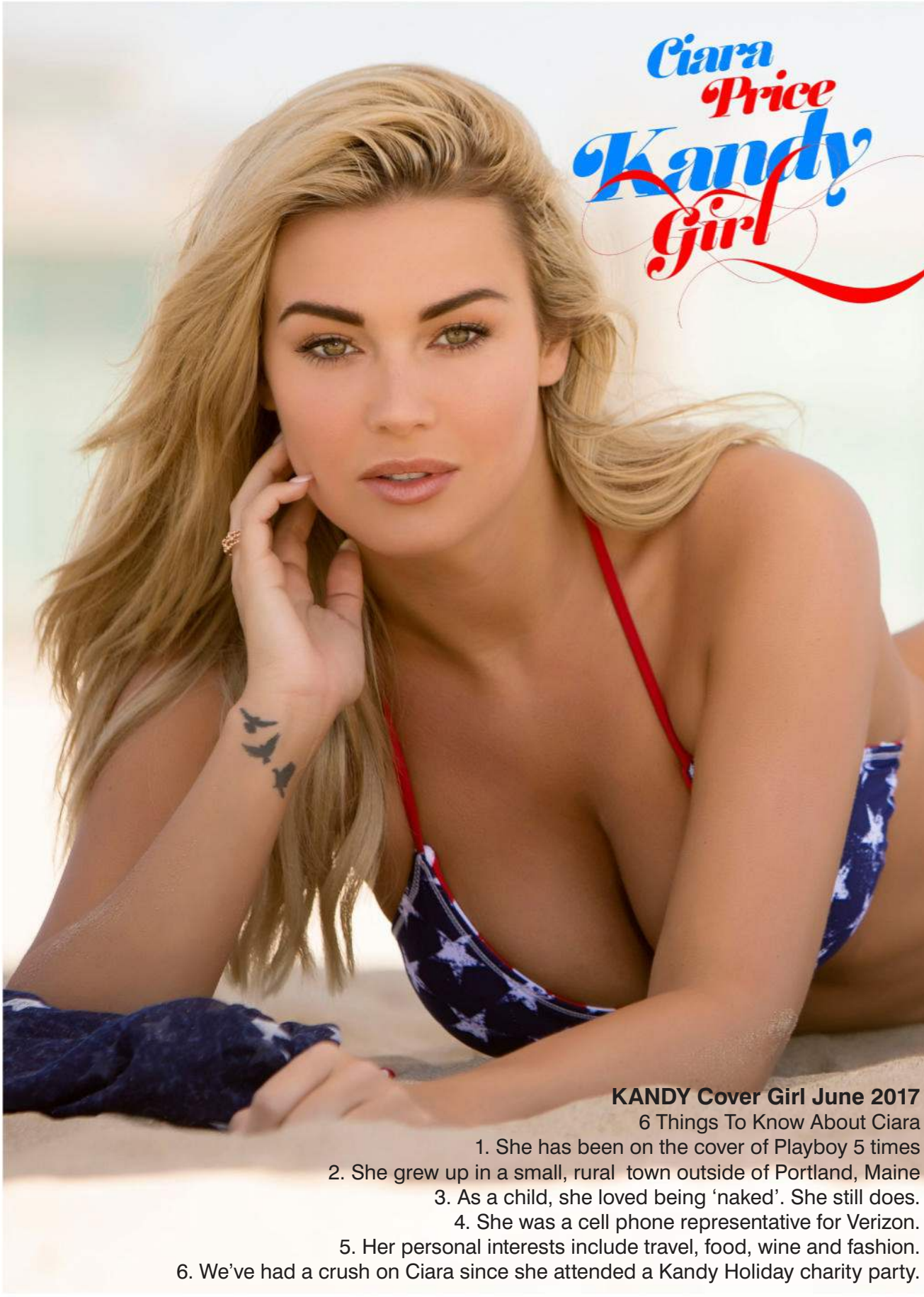

Photo Mario Barberio, HMU Michelle Vanderhule, Stylist Natalia, Location: Venich Beach, CA

KANDY Cover Girl June 2017

6 Things To Know About Ciara

1. She has been on the cover of Playboy 5 times
2. She grew up in a small, rural town outside of Portland, Maine
3. As a child, she loved being 'naked'. She still does.
4. She was a cell phone representative for Verizon.
5. Her personal interests include travel, food, wine and fashion.
6. We've had a crush on Ciara since she attended a Kandy Holiday charity party.

Photo Courtesy BikiniTeam TV

Photo Luke Pearsall, Location: Hollywood, CA

6 REVOLUTION ARENAS WHERE THE AMERICAN EDGE WAS FORGED

Enjoy this full, uncut, high-caliber history of how a bunch of heavily armed, unapologetic outlaws went toe-to-toe with the greatest military machine on earth and put them in the dirt. To give these battlegrounds their proper historical treatment, we don't skim the surface. We dive into the black powder, the freezing mud, and the sheer, insane audacity of the men who built this country. They weren't diplomats. They were hard men who refused to be ruled, and they pushed their bodies, their minds, and their luck past every known limit to achieve absolute victory.

LEXINGTON AND CONCORD: THE ULTIMATE F.A.F.O. MOMENT

When you speak of the spark that ignited the United States of America, you bring up the morning of April 19, 1775. The British Empire, dripping with arrogance and powdered-wig superiority, completely miscalculated the Patriots.

General Thomas Gage, the military governor of Massachusetts, thought he was managing a city of uneducated, mouthy dirt farmers. He dispatched 700 ELITE, highly trained Redcoats (the absolute apex predators of 18th-century warfare) to march the 16 miles to Boston and into the countryside.

Their mission: kick down doors in Concord, confiscate a massive stockpile of rebel gunpowder and artillery, and arrest rebel ringleaders, Samuel Adams and John Hancock. They assumed the colonists would scatter upon one glance at the gleaming bayonets.

They guessed wrong. American Minutemen were not European peasants. They were frontier-hardened survivors. These men grew up in the brutal New England winters, guys who would put a musket ball through the eye of a stag at fifty yards just to keep their families from starving.

The battle took place just after dawn on the Lexington Green. Captain John Parker, a veteran of the French and Indian War who was dying of tuberculosis, stood in front of his 77 local militiamen. He looked at the wall of approaching British infantry and delivered one of the hardest lines in military history: "***Stand your ground. Don't fire unless fired upon. But if they mean to have a war, let it begin here.***" To this day, nobody knows who fired first, but the "**Shot Heard 'Round the World**" cracked through the morning air. The British unleashed a devastating volley, leaving eight Americans dead.

The Redcoats cheered, thinking they had crushed the rebellion in five minutes. They marched onto Concord, smashed rebel supplies, and prepared to head back to Boston. As they were celebrating, the American hornets' nest had been kicked. Thousands of enraged, heavily armed militiamen from every surrounding town were sprinting toward the road.

What followed wasn't a gentlemanly battle; it was a 16-mile, blood-soaked gauntlet of pure, unadulterated hell for the British. The Americans threw the European rulebook in the garbage. Instead of standing in neat rows in an open field, the Patriots used the terrain. They became ghosts. They hid behind stone walls, crawled through ditches, and climbed high into the oak trees. They unleashed a relentless, devastating guerrilla sniper attack on the retreating Redcoats.

Every tree lined corner the British turned, exploded with lead. The Americans specifically targeted the British officers (the guys on horses with the shiny epaulet), instantly throwing the enemy chain of command into absolute chaos. The British soldiers - exhausted, out of ammunition, and terrified of an enemy they couldn't even see - broke rank and began to run.

By the time a British relief column finally rescued them near Boston, the Redcoats had suffered staggering casualties - over 270 men killed or wounded. The Americans had sent a violent, unmistakable message to the King of England: We are not subjects anymore, and if you march into our backyard, you are going to bleed. The limit was pushed, the line was crossed, and the ultimate KANDY attitude was born in the smoke of the Massachusetts countryside.

TICONDEROGA: THE MIDNIGHT DOOR KICK

Every legendary revolution needs a high-stakes, adrenaline-fueled heist, and the capture of Fort Ticonderoga in May 1775 is the greatest smash-and-grab in American history. Shortly after the bloodbath at Lexington and Concord, the American militia had managed to trap the British army inside the city of Boston. But there was a massive problem: the Americans had plenty of guys with muskets, but they didn't have any heavy artillery. If you want to crack a city, you need big guns.

Up in the rugged, unforgiving wilderness of upstate New York sat Fort Ticonderoga. It was a massive, star-shaped stone fortress built by the French and now held by the British. More importantly, it was packed to the absolute brim with dozens of heavy iron cannons. The Americans needed those guns, and a man named Ethan Allen decided he was going to take them.

Ethan Allen wasn't a gentleman soldier. He was a massive, roaring, hard-drinking backwoods brawler who led a militia called the Green Mountain Boys. Think of them as the original outlaw biker gang of the 1700s; a rough, rowdy crew from what is now Vermont who answered to nobody.

Joining Allen was Benedict Arnold, who, before his infamous treason, was one of the most reckless, combat-addicted, high-performing commanders in the entire American army. Arnold had a commission from Massachusetts to take the fort, but the Green Mountain Boys refused to follow anyone but Allen. In a massive clash of alpha-male egos, Allen and Arnold agreed to co-command the raid.

They didn't have time or the manpower to lay siege to an impregnable fortress. They didn't negotiate. They relied on pure shock and awe. In the pitch-black, freezing early hours of May 10, Allen, Arnold, and a strike force of 83 men quietly rowed across the treacherous waters of Lake Champlain in a massive rainstorm.

They slipped past sleeping British sentries, breached the stone walls, and kicked in the door to the British commanding officer's sleeping quarters. The Brit awoke to find a giant, furious backwoodsman pointing a sword at his throat. When the stunned, pants-less officer demanded to know under whose authority Allen was demanding the surrender of a fortified royal installation, Allen famously roared, "I*n the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress!*"

The Americans captured the fort in minutes. Zero Patriot casualties. Zero shots fired. It was an act of pure swagger. They walked out with 59 pieces of heavy artillery, over 60 tons of iron and brass.

But stealing the guns was only half the battle. They had to transport them to Boston. Enter Henry Knox, a 25-year-old, self-taught genius who weighed 250 pounds and owned a bookstore. Knox orchestrated one of the most insane logistical feats of the war. In the dead of the brutal New England winter, Knox and his men, using ox-drawn sleds, dragged 60 tons of artillery across 300 miles of frozen rivers, massive snowdrifts, and jagged mountains. When the guns finally appeared on the heights above Boston, pointing directly down the throats of the British navy, the British evacuated the city without firing a shot. The Ticonderoga heist was a masterclass in American audacity.

TRENTON: THE CHRISTMAS NIGHT MASSACRE

Talk about grinding through the absolute bottom to reach the top. Take a look back at the winter of 1776. By December, the American Revolution was on life support. The Continental Army had been brutally beaten, starved, and chased all the way out of New York and across the Delaware River into Pennsylvania. The men were freezing, riddled with disease, and wrapping their bleeding feet in rags due to no boots. To make matters infinitely worse, their enlistment contracts expired on December 31st. The army was about to dissolve. The war was over.

The British, brimming with over confidence that they had finally broken the American spirit, retired to warm winter quarters and hired a garrison of brutal, highly trained German mercenaries (the Hessians) to guard their outpost at Trenton, New Jersey.

George Washington knew that if he didn't deliver a massive, miraculous victory immediately, the United States was dead. You could call this his Washiton moment. He made the ultimate high-roller gamble. He decided to attack a superior, professional force in the middle of winter.

On Christmas night, while the Hessians were drinking and sleeping off their holiday celebrations, Washington put his shattered army into motion. In the middle of a blinding, freezing Nor'easter (such a term did not exist back then) that dumped rain, sleet, and snow, he loaded his men into flat-bottomed cargo boats. The river was choked with massive, lethal blocks of floating ice that threatened to crush the wooden hulls. It was a suicide mission.

John Glover's regiment of tough, salt-crusted mariners from Marblehead, Massachusetts, fought the river and pushed the army across in the pitch black. The march to Trenton was so brutal that Washington's men left literal trails of blood in the snow from their bare feet.

When the Americans hit Trenton at dawn on December 26, the storm was raging so hard that the gunpowder in their muskets was soaked and useless. When his officers reported that the guns wouldn't fire, Washington didn't blink. He gave the chilling, ruthless order: "*Use the bayonet. I am resolved to take Trenton*."

The Americans descended on the town with the absolute violence of action. Henry Knox dragged his artillery to the top of the main streets and unleashed a devastating barrage of grapeshot that shredded the Hessian formations before they could even organize. The Americans engaged in savage, close-quarters street combat, clearing houses with cold steel. The Hessian commander, Colonel Rall, was shot completely out of his saddle.

In under an hour, the Hessians were completely overwhelmed, surrounded, and crushed. Nearly 900 professional German mercenaries surrendered to a starving, freezing mob of American insurgents. Washington didn't lose a single man in combat (though two tragically froze to death on the march). It was a savage, calculated military operation that shocked the world, saved the Continental Army from collapse, and proved that the American Patriot is at his most dangerous when he is backed entirely into a corner.

SARATOGA: RULES OF THE GAME CHANGE

If Trenton was the street fight that kept the American dream alive, the autumn 1777 Battle of Saratoga was the heavyweight title bout where America proved it could stand in the center of the ring and knock out a global superpower.

The British master plan for 1777 was designed to be the kill shot. General John "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne (a wealthy, arrogant aristocrat who actually traveled with a wardrobe of fine china and champagne) marched a massive, heavily armed invasion force south from Canada. His goal was to push down the Hudson River, completely sever New England from the rest of the colonies, and strangle the rebellion to death.

But Burgoyne vastly underestimated the savage terrain of the upstate New York wilderness, and more importantly, he underestimated the lethality of the men waiting for him.

Waiting in the dense forests was Daniel Morgan and his elite corps of Virginia riflemen. These men were the Tier 1 Special Operators of the 18th century. While the standard British soldier carried a smoothbore musket that was hopelessly inaccurate past 80 yards, Morgan's men carried custom-built, rifled long guns. In the hands of a frontier sharpshooter, these rifles could drop a man with terrifying precision at 300 yards.

When Burgoyne's army stumbled into the American trap at Saratoga, the Patriots threw the European concepts of "honorable warfare" completely out the window. Morgan explicitly ordered his snipers to headhunt the British commanding officers, the artillerymen, and the Native American scouts. They climbed onto trees and rained accurate, lethal fire down on the British columns. To the Brits, intentionally targeting an officer was a war crime. To the Americans, it was just good business. Without their leadership, the British infantry descended into total, bloody chaos.

The undisputed, American rockstar of Saratoga was Benedict Arnold. Long before he sold out his country, he was a combat junkie who lived for the frontline adrenaline. During the climax of the battle at Bemis Heights, Arnold had been relieved of his command after a furious screaming match with his superior, General Horatio Gates. Arnold didn't care. When he heard the sound of the cannons firing, he defied orders, leapt onto his horse, and charged wildly into the absolute thickest part of the carnage. He was a maniac on the battlefield, rallying the exhausted American troops and leading a massive, suicidal frontal assault directly into the heavily fortified Hessian redoubts. Arnold's horse was shot out from under him, and a musket ball shattered his leg, but his reckless, unstoppable momentum completely broke the British lines.

Surrounded, out of food, and battered into submission, General Burgoyne was forced to surrender his entire massive army to the Americans. It was a flawless, catastrophic defeat for the British Empire. This was the turning point. When the King of France heard of the results of Saratoga, he realized the American outlaws had a chance at winning, and France officially entered the war, backing the United States with the massive naval power and hard cash needed to secure ultimate victory.

COWPENS:
THE BACKWOODS TRAP

Down in the swampy, sweltering, brutal southern theater of the Revolutionary War, the conflict wasn't just a rebellion; it was a ruthless, neighbor-on-neighbor civil war defined by extreme violence and no quarter asked or given. And no British officer was hated more than Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton.

Tarleton, known as "Bloody Ban," was an aggressive, hot-headed, devastatingly effective cavalry commander. He commanded the British Legion, a fast-moving strike force of dragoons known for slaughtering retreating Americans and burning everything in their path. The Patriots despised him, and General Daniel Morgan (the tough, grizzled mastermind of the riflemen from Saratoga) decided it was time to put the arrogant British golden boy in the dirt.

Morgan understood psychology just as well as he understood ballistics. He knew Tarleton was an adrenaline addict who believed the Americans were cowards. He knew Tarleton would charge blindly at the first sign of weakness. In January 1781, Morgan set the ultimate trap at an open cattle grazing ground in South Carolina called Cowpens.

Morgan's tactical layout was a stroke of absolute, devious genius. He placed his raw, untested militia (the guys the British expected to run away) in the very front line. He walked among them the night before, looked them in the eye, and gave them a simple, brilliant order: "*I don't expect you to hold the line. Just give me two fires. Shoot twice, specifically target the officers with the epaulets, and then run away as fast as you can*."

The next morning, Tarleton arrived, took one look at the American militia, smelled blood, and immediately ordered his elite dragoons and the legendary 71st Highlanders to launch a massive, full-speed frontal assault. The American militia did exactly as they were told. They delivered two devastating, point-blank volleys that shredded the British officer corps, and then they broke and sprinted for the rear. Tarleton, thinking he had completely broken the American army, ordered a chaotic, disorganized charge for the slaughter.

When the British infantry surged over the crest of the hill, they ran head-first into Morgan's main line of hardened, blood-tested Continental regulars, who were standing shoulder-to-shoulder, waiting for them with loaded muskets.

The Continental veterans unleashed a massive, synchronized wall of lead right into the faces of the charging British. In a perfectly timed maneuver, the American cavalry swung around the right flank, and the militia (who actually hadn't run away, but had just circled around the hill) reloaded and slammed into the British left flank.

It was a classic double-envelopment, a lethal pincer move that completely surrounded the British force. The trap snapped shut. The British elite troops were utterly annihilated in under an hour. Over 800 British soldiers were killed, wounded, or captured. Tarleton himself barely escaped the carnage with his life, fleeing the battlefield in total disgrace. Morgan had completely outplayed, out-thought, and out-fought the most feared commander in the British army, permanently crippling the Crown's forces in the South.

YORKTOWN: GRAND FINALE

This was the kill shot. After six brutal years of bleeding, starving, freezing, and surviving against impossible odds, the American Patriots finally had the British Empire exactly where they wanted. In the fall of 1781, a combined force of Washington's Continental Army and the French military trapped the main British army under General Lord Cornwallis on a peninsula at Yorktown, Virginia. With the French Navy blockading the coast and Washington blocking the land, Cornwallis was cut-off.

Yorktown wasn't a chaotic, running gun battle in the woods; it was a highly calculated, mechanically precise, and terrifying siege. The Americans dug miles of parallel trenches, pushing their massive siege cannons closer and closer to the British lines. When the trenches were finished, the Americans unleashed hell.

The artillery bombardment was relentles; a 24/7 rain of heavy iron cannonballs and explosive mortar shells pounded the British fortifications, smashing stone, splintering wood, and turning Yorktown into a completely unlivable nightmare of fire and shrapnel.

The Americans needed to capture two heavily defended earthen bunkers known as Redoubt 9 and Redoubt 10, which guarded the edge of the British lines, to officially break the back of the British defense and end the war.

The defining moment of the siege came on a pitch-black night, October 14th. A young, fiercely ambitious, violently energetic American artillery officer begged Washington for the chance to lead the suicide squad into Redoubt 10. His name: Alexander Hamilton.

Hamilton knew that if a single American soldier got nervous and fired his musket in the dark, the flash would give away their position, and the British cannons would rip them to shreds before they ever reached the walls. Hamilton made the ultimate, hardcore demand: he ordered his men to completely unload their weapons. There would be no gunfire. They were going into the bunker with nothing but cold steel.

Under the cover of total darkness, Hamilton and his elite commandos sprinted across the open, muddy ground. They didn't stop when the British sentries spotted them and opened fire. They leaped over the wooden spike defenses, scrambled up the steep dirt walls of the bunker, and threw themselves directly into the trenches with the British defenders.

It was a brutal, savage, hand-to-hand brawl in the dark with bayonets and swords. The sheer violence and speed of the American assault shocked the defenders. Hamilton and his men captured the redoubt in a matter of minutes.

With those bunkers taken, Washington moved his heavy artillery up to the British doorstep and aimed point-blank. Cornwallis had nowhere to hide. Days later, the British general formally surrendered his entire army. As the defeated, humiliated Redcoats marched out of their fortifications to lay down their weapons, their military band famously played a tune called The World Turned Upside Down.

They were right. A ragtag mob of outlaws, smugglers, and farmers had just beaten the greatest military superpower the world had ever seen.

GEORGE WASHINGTON: THE ULTIMATE ALPHA

When we look back at the Founding Fathers, history books tend to paint them as polite philosophers in powdered wigs arguing over parchment. But if you want to understand George Washington, you have to realize one absolute truth: the man was a beast. He wasn't a politician; he was the ultimate battlefield alpha male. At 6-foot-2 and over 200 pounds of muscle, with broad shoulders and a terrifyingly stoic demeanor, Washington commanded respect just by walking into a room.

His greatest superpower wasn't necessarily his tactical genius. In fact, he lost more battles than he won. He was the original Mendoza line. His true superpower was an unbreakable, borderline terrifying level of grit. He possessed a physical and mental endurance that is almost impossible to comprehend today.

Look at the winter encampment at Valley Forge in 1777. The Continental Army was starving to death in the snow. Men were dying by the hundreds of typhus, dysentery, and exposure. They were eating shoe leather to survive. Any normal general would have surrendered, or at least retreated to a warm, comfortable mansion in Philadelphia to wait out the winter. Not Washington. He stayed in the freezing, miserable camp with his men. He demanded absolute discipline, hanging deserters and relying on sheer force of will to forge a broken, dying mob into a lethal, professional fighting force.

The moments when Washington became a god to his men was in the white-hot heat of combat. He didn't lead from a tent in the rear; he led from the front, and he was completely, utterly fearless. At the Battle of Princeton, when the American line began to shatter and the men turned to run in panic from the advancing British bayonets, Washington didn't scream orders from afar. He spurred his massive white stallion and rode directly into the crossfire, placing himself exactly between the fleeing Americans and the British firing line.

He was a mere thirty yards from the enemy muzzles. He calmly rallied his men, sitting tall in the saddle, as a storm of lead flew around him. Aides covered their eyes, certain their commander was about to be blown to pieces. When the smoke cleared, Washington was completely untouched, waving his men forward to counterattack. He had horses shot out from under him. He had bullet holes tear through his coats. But he never flinched.

He motivated his men to achieve the impossible not by giving flowery, polite speeches, but by standing in the absolute center of the carnage, completely unfazed, proving that he was willing to bleed and die right alongside them. That is the true, unfiltered American edge. That is the kind of man it takes to build a nation from scratch or in today's America, recapture what had been lost by meek, corporate bought and paid for, foreign-controlled politicians.

UNTAMED & UNAPOLOGETIC: AMERICA'S MOST SAVAGE LANDSCAPES

Two Hundred and Fifty Years.

A quarter of a millennium. That is exactly how long the United States of America has been writing its own story in blood, sweat, steel, and gunpowder. As we load up the coolers, fire up the grills, and prepare to celebrate the Semiquincentennial "the big 2-5-0" the airwaves and newsstands are going to be completely flooded with the same old tired, predictable clichés. You know the drill: stock photos of fireworks exploding over quiet suburban cul-de-sacs, polite historical essays about the founding fathers, and gentle, sleepy reviews of rolling green hills in New England.

But that is not the KANDY style. We don't do sleepy. We don't do polite. And we sure as hell don't do boring.

The KANDY lifestyle is about living on the bleeding edge of the redline. It is about raw energy, unapologetic freedom, and the kind of heart-pounding beauty that stops you dead in your tracks. When we look at America at 250, we aren't looking at the manicured lawns, the gated communities, or the concrete jungles. We are looking at the dirt. We are looking at the rock. We are looking at the savage, untamed, and wildly dangerous landscapes that make this country the most formidable piece of real estate on the planet.

This is a nation carved out of jagged granite, boiling geysers, and endless, scorching deserts. It is loud. It is dangerous. And it is overwhelmingly, unapologetically beautiful. When you strip away the strip malls, the Wi-Fi signals, and the endless digital noise of the twenty-first century, what you have left is a frontier that still demands your absolute respect. So, strap in and drop the hammer. We are taking a high-octane tour of the beautiful country; the jaw-dropping, awe-inspiring natural wonders that every red-blooded American needs to look in the eye at least once before they die.

The Abyss of the Southwest: The Grand Canyon

Let's start with the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world. The Grand Canyon. Forget every postcard you have ever seen in a souvenir shop. Forget the middle school geography textbooks you skimmed as a kid. Photographs are completely, utterly useless when it comes to capturing the sheer, terrifying scale of this place.

When you park the rig, step out into the blistering Arizona heat, and take a dead sprint to the edge of the rim, your brain practically short-circuits trying to process the view. It is a mile-deep abyss of glowing red, orange, and gold rock that stretches out so far the horizon literally bends. The silence here is deafening. It is a two-billion-year-old scar carved into the earth by the relentless, churning force of the Colorado River, and standing on its edge makes you realize exactly how incredibly small you really are.

This isn't a gentle nature walk; this is an encounter with deep time.

Imagine the ultimate KANDY photoshoot set against this backdrop. The sun is setting, casting long, razor-sharp shadows across the canyon floor. The air is thick with the smell of dry dust, pine, and sagebrush. You've got a vintage, open-top Ford Bronco parked precariously close to the edge of a sheer drop-off, and one of our top KANDY models draped across the hood, a perfect, striking contrast of high-fashion glamour and brutal, rugged nature. That is the essence of the American aesthetic.

The Grand Canyon doesn't care about you. It doesn't care about your cell service, your bank account, or your deadlines. If you slip, it will swallow you whole. The trails leading down to the river (the Bright Angel and the South Kaibab) are grueling, muscle-shredding descents that have broken elite athletes and seasoned hikers alike. Temperatures at the bottom regularly soar past 115 degrees in the dead of summer. It is a crucible of heat and stone. But for those willing to brave the descent, the reward is an unparalleled sense of conquest. You are standing in the belly of the beast, looking up at two billion years of geological history stacked in glowing, neon-colored layers. It is raw, it is massive, and it is entirely American.

The Anvil of the Sun: Death Valley

If the Grand Canyon is a testament to the unyielding power of water, Death Valley is a monument to the absolute, unforgiving tyranny of the sun. As we celebrate 250 years of American resilience, there is no better place to test your mettle than a landscape that actively, persistently tries to kill you.

Straddling the remote border of California and Nevada, Death Valley is a hostile, alien moonscape of cracked white salt flats, rolling golden sand dunes, and jagged, rusted mountains. It holds the record for the hottest air temperature ever reliably recorded on planet Earth: a flesh-melting 134 degrees Fahrenheit. This is the anvil of the sun. It is a place of brutal extremes, where the elevation drops to 282 feet below sea level at Badwater Basin - the lowest point in North America.

Why the hell would anyone want to go there? Because there is a stark, unforgiving beauty to it, and because the KANDY ethos thrives on pushing the limits. Death Valley is the ultimate proving ground. It is where automotive engineers drag their prototype hypercars and heavy-duty trucks to see if the engine blocks will literally explode under the stress of the thermal load. It is a place for outlaws, thrill-seekers, and adrenaline junkies who want to see what happens when the needle is buried in the red.

Driving a high-performance machine down the long, arrow-straight stretches of blacktop that cut through the valley floor is a surreal, hallucinatory experience. The heat ripples off the asphalt in aggressive waves, distorting the horizon into a shimmering mirage. You blast the air conditioning, grip the leather steering wheel, and watch the dashboard thermometer climb to numbers that don't even compute for a terrestrial environment. Out here, the landscape is stripped down to its absolute bare bones. There are no trees to hide behind. There is no shade.

The sun beats down with a heavy, physical weight.

But when the sun finally sets, Death Valley undergoes a miraculous, breathtaking transformation. The skies turn violent shades of purple, crimson, and bruised blue. Because there is zero light pollution out in the deep desert, the night sky simply explodes with the Milky Way. It is a dazzling, chaotic spray of stars that makes the daytime suffering entirely worth it. It is America at its most extreme; hot, fast, and entirely untamed.

The Vertical Limit: Yosemite's Granite Battleground

Now, we trade the scorching, flat floor of the desert for the dizzying, vertical heights of the Sierra Nevada mountains. Welcome to Yosemite National Park. If you want to talk about American exceptionalism, look no further than El Capitan. It is a three-thousand-foot monolith of sheer, unbroken granite that shoots straight up out of the valley floor like a giant, geological middle finger to gravity.

For decades, it was considered entirely impossible to climb. Now, it is the global epicenter for the most insane, gravity-defying athletes on the planet. Yosemite is not your grandfather's weekend camping trip. It is a high-stakes arena for modern gladiators who wear climbing harnesses and chalk bags instead of armor. The energy here is electric. It is a violent collision of dense, ancient redwood forests, thundering waterfalls that drop hundreds of feet in a single, deafening plunge, and lethal drop-offs that require absolute physical perfection.

The KANDY reader respects the hustle, and there is no hustle quite like staring up at a vertical wall of rock that is taller than the tallest skyscraper in the world and deciding you are going to scale it with your bare hands. The culture surrounding Yosemite is a unique, intoxicating blend of dirtbag climber grit and high-adrenaline ambition. It is a place where you wake up freezing before dawn, brew a cup of thick black coffee over a camp stove, and set out to conquer the stone before the tourists even wake up.

And the sheer, aggressive beauty of the place is almost offensive. When the late afternoon sun hits the sheer granite face of Half Dome, the rock literally glows like it is on fire. The air is crisp, thin, and smells heavily of pine needles and pure ozone. This is the kind of landscape that forces you to step up your game. Whether you are navigating the treacherous, winding switchbacks of the mountain passes in a precision-tuned sports car or hiking out to the jagged edge of Glacier Point to look straight down on the valley floor, Yosemite demands your full, undivided attention. It is wild, it is dangerous; grizzly bears and sheer cliffs do not negotiate or accept apologies. And it is a flawless representation of the soaring ambition that has defined America for the last two and a half centuries.

The Primal Swamp: The Florida Everglades

Let's take a hard right turn, drop out of the mountains, and head south. America isn't just soaring mountains and sun-blasted deserts; it is also a swampy, prehistoric jungle teeming with apex predators. Down at the very southern tip of Florida lies the Everglades, the legendary "River of Grass."

This is not a traditional national park; it is a two-million-acre combat zone of suffocating humidity, razor-sharp sawgrass, and hundreds of thousands of teeth. As the nation turns 250, we have to pay our respects to the absolute savagery of the American subtropics. This is a landscape straight out of the Jurassic period. The water here moves incredibly slow, but absolutely everything else moves fast. It is a dark, humid labyrinth of twisted mangrove tunnels and murky waters where massive, thirteen-foot American alligators rule the ecosystem with unquestioned authority.

The only way to truly experience it is by strapping yourself into an airboat—which is essentially a flat-bottomed piece of aluminum powered by a massive, deafening V8 engine and an airplane propeller—and blasting across the shallow water at fifty miles an hour. It is loud, it is fast, and it kicks up a massive wake of swamp mud and pure adrenaline. The KANDY lifestyle is about embracing the thrill, and let me tell you, nothing gets the blood pumping quite like gliding over dark, opaque water, knowing exactly what kind of monsters are swimming just beneath the surface.

The heat is physically oppressive, sticking to your skin like a wet blanket the moment you step outside, but there is a deeply primal allure to the swamp. It is completely, stubbornly untamable. Bureaucrats and developers have tried for a hundred years to drain it, pave it, and build strip malls over it, but the Everglades always fights back. It is a resilient, aggressive ecosystem that simply refuses to yield. It is the perfect setting for a sultry, high-contrast editorial spread—think heavy, humid, golden-hour light, our stunning KANDY models, and the dangerous, exotic, untamed backdrop of the deep south.

The Edge of the World: The Pacific Coast Highway

The grand finale of the American landscape. The Pacific Coast Highway, specifically the treacherous, winding stretch cutting through Big Sur, is where the land goes to war with the ocean. It is the ultimate driving road, a narrow ribbon of asphalt that clings desperately to the side of towering, jagged cliffs while the frigid, violently churning waters of the Pacific Ocean explode against the rocks hundreds of feet below.

The scenery is a complete blur of towering redwood groves plunging directly into the sea. There are no guardrails in the places where it really matters. One wrong move, one moment of distraction, and you are taking a very long, very fatal plunge into the surf. It is the perfect metaphor for the American dream: fast, incredibly beautiful, and riding right on the razor's edge of disaster. For 250 years, Americans have been pushing west, chasing the horizon, and this is where the road finally runs out.

250 Years of Majesty

When we raise a glass of premium bourbon this summer to celebrate the 250th birthday of the United States, we need to toast to the dirt, the rock, the water, and the sun. We need to toast to the savagery of the American landscape.

It is a beautiful country, but it is not a soft one. It requires grit, ambition, and a serious taste for adrenaline to truly appreciate what this land has to offer.

So, pack a duffel bag, grab the keys to something fast and loud, and get out there. The wild is waiting. Here is to 250 years of untamed, unapologetic American majesty. May it never be broken, and may it never be tamed.

AMERICA'S BACKCOUNTRY

You thought we were finished? Not a chance. When you're dealing with a landmass that spans 3.8 million square miles and has spent the last 250 years breeding the toughest bastards on the planet, you don't just stop at the coastlines and the canyons. The American frontier is too massive, too violent, and too legendary to cram into a single tank of gas.

If you want to truly understand the sheer, unadulterated horsepower of the American wilderness, you have to dig deeper into the interior. You have to seek out the places where the air gets thin, the water runs muddy and deep, and the ground literally boils beneath your boots.

For the KANDY reader who isn't satisfied until the adrenaline is maxed out, consider this your official expansion pack to the most savage landscapes in the country.

Enjoy more heavyweight contenders that prove, at 250 years old, America is Mother Nature's most dangerous playground.

Sleeping on a Supervolcano: Yellowstone's Geothermal Violence

Let's get one thing straight right out of the gate: Yellowstone is not a petting zoo. It is not a gentle, family-friendly walk in the woods. Yellowstone National Park is a 3,400-square-mile stretch of pristine wilderness sitting directly on top of a massive, active, continent-crushing supervolcano. When you walk through the Lamar Valley or stand on the boardwalks of the Upper Geyser Basin, you are literally strolling across a ticking geological time bomb. There is a primal, aggressive energy to Yellowstone that you can feel vibrating in the soles of your boots. The ground hisses, spits, and violently erupts. There are over 10,000 hydrothermal features here—boiling, neon-colored acid pools that can strip meat from bone, and geysers that shoot thousands of gallons of scalding water hundreds of feet into the freezing Wyoming air. It smells heavily of sulfur, pine resin, and raw earth. It's exactly the kind of volatile, unpredictable environment that separates the men from the tourists.

Then there are the locals. We aren't talking about squirrels and songbirds. Yellowstone is ruled by two-ton, prehistoric muscle cars covered in fur - the American Bison. These things look slow, but they can sprint at thirty-five miles an hour and will absolutely total a rental car without breaking a sweat. Throw in the apex predators(massive grizzly bears and packs of grey wolves that roam the backcountry with ruthless efficiency) and you have a landscape that demands total situational awareness.

Yellowstone offers an incredible, moody contrast. Imagine a photoshoot in the crisp, freezing air of an early October morning. Thick, white steam is billowing off the Grand Prismatic Spring, wrapping our models in a thick, sultry fog against a backdrop of deep, black-green pine forests. It is raw, untamed beauty layered over the constant, thrilling threat of absolute destruction.That's the American way.

The Oxygen-Starved Arena: The Colorado Rocky Mountains

If Death Valley is about surviving the heat, the Colorado Rockies are about conquering the sky. We are talking about the undisputed spine of the North American continent. This isn't a mountain range; it is a jagged, snow-capped fortress of stone that routinely pushes the human body to its absolute breaking point.

Welcome to the land of the “14ers” - the fifty-eight peaks in Colorado that shatter the 14,000-foot elevation mark. The air is thin, the weather is violently unpredictable, and the stakes are life and death. Pushing for a summit requires burning lungs, screaming quads, and the kind of mental grit that only comes from knowing that one wrong step on a loose scree field means a very fast, very permanent ride to the bottom.

When the powder dumps in the winter, the Rockies transform into the ultimate high-speed playground for the adrenaline elite. The backcountry drops, the avalanche chutes, and the double-black diamonds of places like Telluride and Aspen are where fear goes to die. It is about strapping fiberglass to your feet, dropping into a near-vertical bowl, and outrunning an avalanche of white-hot speed.

The aprés-ski culture of the Rockies is legendary; trading in the heavy Gore-Tex and frozen goggles for roaring fires, high-end whiskey, and the intoxicating energy of high-altitude nightlife. It’s a flawless mix of bone-chilling outdoor combat during the day, and absolute, unapologetic luxury at night. The Rockies are a monument to the American desire to climb higher, push harder, and look down on the rest of the world from the top of the food chain.

The Muddy Artery of America: The Mighty Mississippi River

You can’t celebrate 250 years of American greatness without paying respects to the lifeblood that physically built this country. .

This isn’t a lazy river you float down on an inner tube with a piña colada. The Mississippi is a roaring, muddy, liquid freight train that violently rips the United States directly in half. Stretching over 2,300 miles from the frigid lakes of Minnesota down to the sweltering, voodoo-soaked swamps of the Louisiana Delta, the Mississippi is the industrial, raw, beating heart of the American heartland.

Its currents are treacherous, hiding massive, submerged trees and rip currents that have swallowed massive steel barges whole. The river is a beast of burden, constantly churning with thousands of tons of cargo, massive paddlewheelers, and the deafening blast of ship horns echoing through the thick, humid air.

There is a gritty, dangerous romance to the Mississippi. It is the birthplace of the blues, the highway of outlaws, and the absolute embodiment of the rugged, blue-collar backbone of the nation. It represents the hustle. To capture the KANDY edge here, you look to the sultry, oppressive heat of the Delta, where the air is thick enough to cut with a knife. Picture a sprawling, rustic riverbank at dusk; the water glowing like liquid copper in the fading light, the heavy scent of sweet tea and barbecue smoke hanging in the air, and our models channeling that fierce, undeniable Southern-gothic heat.

The Mississippi River doesn’t stop for anything, and it doesn’t apologize for what it destroys when it floods. It is relentless. It is powerful. It is exactly the kind of unstoppable force that defines the American spirit.

As we light up the sky for America 250, remember that America wasn’t built by playing it safe in the shallow end. It was built by staring down the supervolcanoes, scaling the death-defying peaks, and riding the muddy, treacherous currents all the way to the gulf. The American wilderness is an absolute savage and we wouldn’t have it any other way.

Photo Mike Prado

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APRIL CHERYSE

MISS KANDY SUMMER 2026

ORANGE COUNTY'S FINEST

Orange County, California once known for its endless acres of Orange groves, now well-known for showcasing the hottest women in America. Beach blondes, skimpy bikinis and sun-kissed bodies adorned with only the bare essentials line the sands of Huntington Beach, Newport Beach, Laguna Beach, Corona Del Mar and other hot beach spots along the Orange County coast. Emerging from the glistening surf and these majestic beaches of Orange County is our Miss KANDY Summer 2026, April Cheryse.

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MISS KANDY SUMMER 2026
April Cheryse

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AMERICAN WOMAN JENNIFER IRENE

Photo Mike Prado, HMU Teri Groves, Location Kandy Beach House, Monarch Bay, CA

She's as American as baseball and apple pie, as immigrants and the 2nd Amendment, as Hollywood and our armed forces.

She's of Taiwanese (mom) and Mexican (dad) heritage. She is first-generation American of Taiwanese and Mexican parents. She speaks fluent Mandarin y un poquito español (a little Spanish).

She is charitable with her time. She worked with the charity "Operation Rock the Troops™" and for two months went on a cross-country tour of America, a new city every day. Learn more at www.operationrockthetroops.org.

She is part of a documentary, produced by Dave Maynard of Warfighter Academy and a retired U.S Navy SEAL, where women with little to no previous military or policing experience are taught by Navy seals and SWAT team members how to properly survey and clear an area of hostile forces.

SHE IS JENNIFER IRENE!!!

OUR RED, WHITE & BLUE ALL-AMERICAN KANDY GIRL!

Reintroduce yourself to our 11 Year Anniversary KANDY Cover Girl

Photos Thuy Tran
HMU Sara Cranham
Stylist Natalia Na'lia
Assistant Hiromi Oshima
Location Studio City, CA

Jessica Hall decided to show her appreciation to America and the men and women who protect this country.

Photographer Thuy Tran was brought in to bring out the vibrancy of the American colors, assembled by stylist Natalia Na'lia, and Hiromi Oshima - our March 2013 Kandy cover model. Hair and makeup artist Sara Cranham gave Jessica a good old-fashioned pin-up glamour look and feel. Kandy celebrity interviewer and The Bachleor Bob Guiney was given the enviable task of interviewing Jessica. The entire team did an amazing job of pulling off a tribute to America.

Bob Guiney: You went All American Girl! It's a beautiful Vargas Girl/ pin up girl look! You had to be so happy! Was it your concept?

Jessica: I did get to choose what I wanted but of course it had to be approved by Kandy. I know it was kind of hard for them, because the magazine is very sexy and upscale, but I also wanted the pictorial to represent me. So here ya' go! The All-American girl, beer drinking, BBQ, swimming and overall… I just really love our country!! And since it is the July issue, I figured there's no better way to show love to our great country than by really showing the love!

Bob: I love this story. Tell me the story again.
Jessica:I love this story too! I skipped class to go with a group of friends to audition for this new MTV show called "Burned". Of course I should say, "*Don't skip class… Stay in school*!" But anyway, all I remember thinking is, '*Wow there are a ton of girls*!' I was confused on what exactly they wanted. And at this point, I had never been to a casting or anything, and had never seen so many beautiful girls in one room. I sat there and waited until I was called… which was 4 hours later! I'm one of the last people left and I just walked in with my school resume and a picture my mom took in our front yard. The casting director was not impressed and made some comment. I snapped back and said, "*I waited forever and now I'm ready to audition*!" He looked stunned and told me to go ahead. Who knew?? Two call backs later, I booked my first audition ever! It was a dream that became a reality.

“I didn’t even have to flash the crowd... That part comes later. ;)

“Gotta’ maintain
that booty!

NIKKI LEIGH SALUTES THE USO AND OUR MILITARY

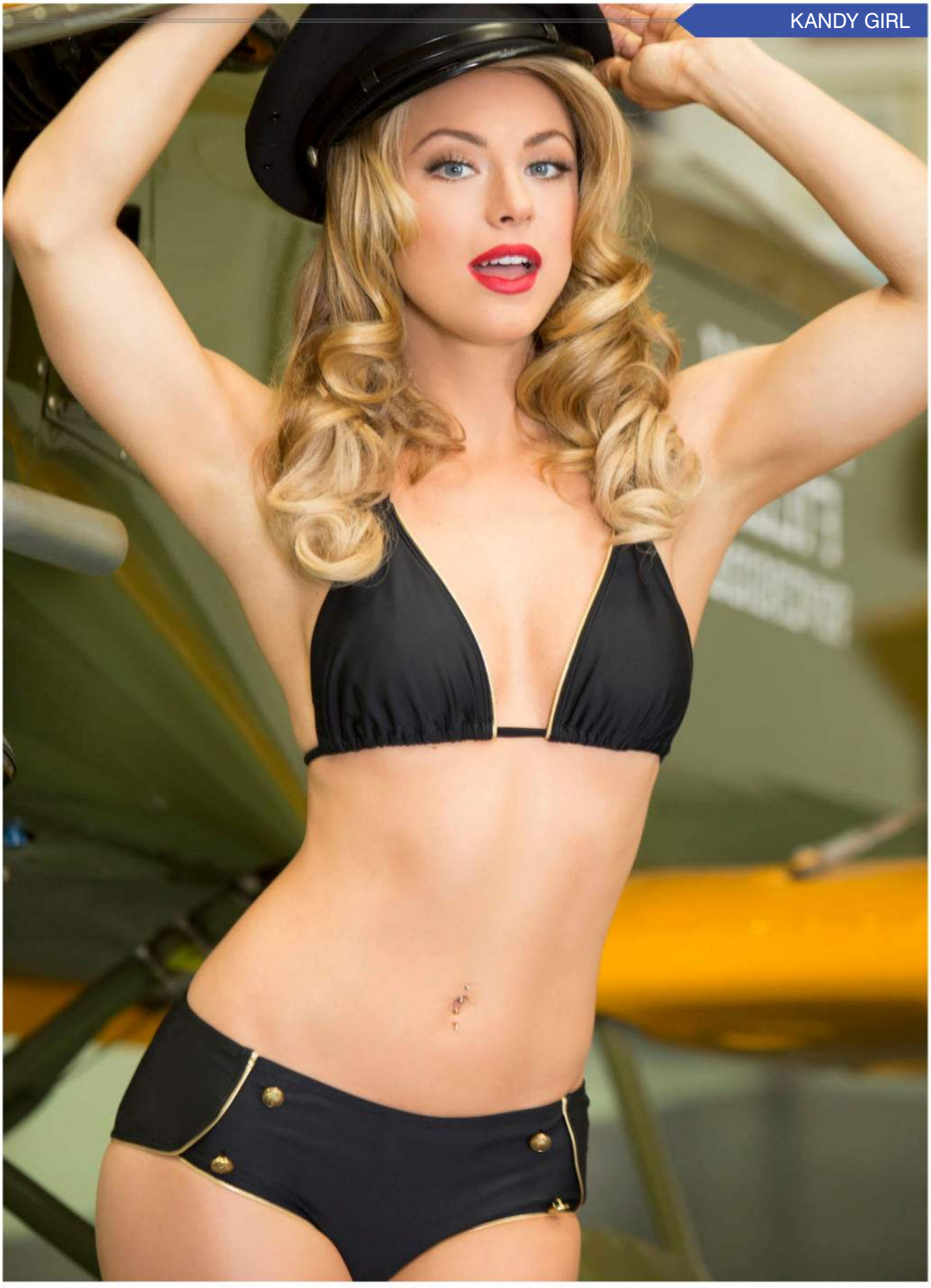
Photos Mario Barberio, HMU Michelle Vanderhule, Stylist Joi Salvador

Why a tribute to the military? OMG! When we talking about the shoot I remembered that 2016 was the 75th Anniversary of the USO, that what made we want to do this. I wanted to show military appreciation.

It is quite the tribute to the fighting men and women of our Armed Forces. You've got a B-29 bomber, a General's car from WWII, a helicopter from Vietnam, a troop carrier from the Korean war, and a C-141 Starlifter from the Vietnam war. What was it like taking a trip through our 20th Century military timeline? We had an amazing location that really stayed true to our history; fighter jets, helicopters, military vehicles and all the while learning the history of the planes and equipment. It was an educational shoot as well.

It was really amazing to me we were able to around real life bomber planes and cargo planes that were used in historical events. It gave me a whole new respect for our history and meant more than just an ordinary photo shoot. Plus, I had my favorite crew – hair, makeup, photographer and stylist.

Which aircraft was the most impressive to you? I enjoyed the cargo plane, it had so much history and richness to me. Our consultant on location let us know that it is so big that they throw events inside it. I found that amazing.



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LAUREN SMITTY

RED, WHITE & BLUE RAPID FIRE CHALLENGE

Lauren accepted our rapid fire challenge to a game of Red, White, & Blue AMERICA We speak American, Lauren gives us a word to match.

K: Stars & Stripes
L: Flag Bikini (K: hell yeah!)

K: Huntiong Beach
L: Dog Beach

K: Mount Rushmore
L: Rock Face Guys

K: George Washington
L: Dollars

K: Ben Franklin
L: Hundies

K: Abe Lincoln
L: Freedom

K: JFK
L: Marilyn Monroe

K: Apple Pie
L: Whip Cream

K: Baseball
L: Nachos

K: Fireworks
L: 4th of July!

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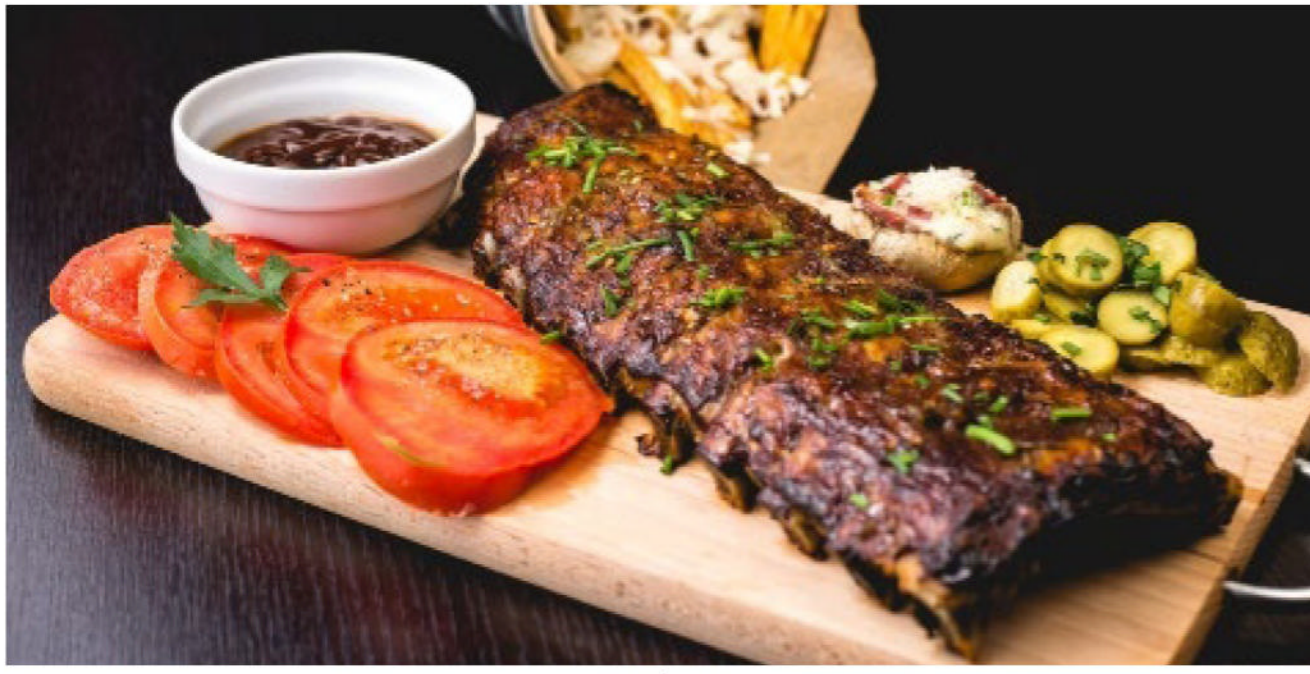
Sizzle Up Your Summer: Scrumptious BBQ RIBS



BBQ Ribs with Homemade Sauce
- 2 racks of baby back ribs
- 1 cup ketchup
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 4 tablespoon smoked paprika
- 3 tablespoon garlic powder
- 3 tablespoon onion powder
- Salt and pepper

Instructions:
1. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees.

2. Using a carving knife, remove the filmy skin from the bottom of the ribs. Flip the ribs over and season the ribs, with 2 tablespoons of paprika, garlic and onion powder. Generously pour salt and pepper. Rub the seasoning firmly into the meat. Double wrap the ribs in foil and place on middle oven rack. Place a baking sheet on the lower rack of oven to catch drippings.

3. In a bowl, whisk together the ketchup, brown sugar, apple cider vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, Dijon mustard, and remaining smoked paprika, garlic powder, and onion powder to make the homemade BBQ sauce.

4. Bake the ribs for about 2 ½ hours.

5. Preheat the grill to medium heat. Remove ribs from foil, grill and baste with the BBQ sauce for 15 minutes, turning the ribs occasionally, approximately every 5 minutes of grilling.

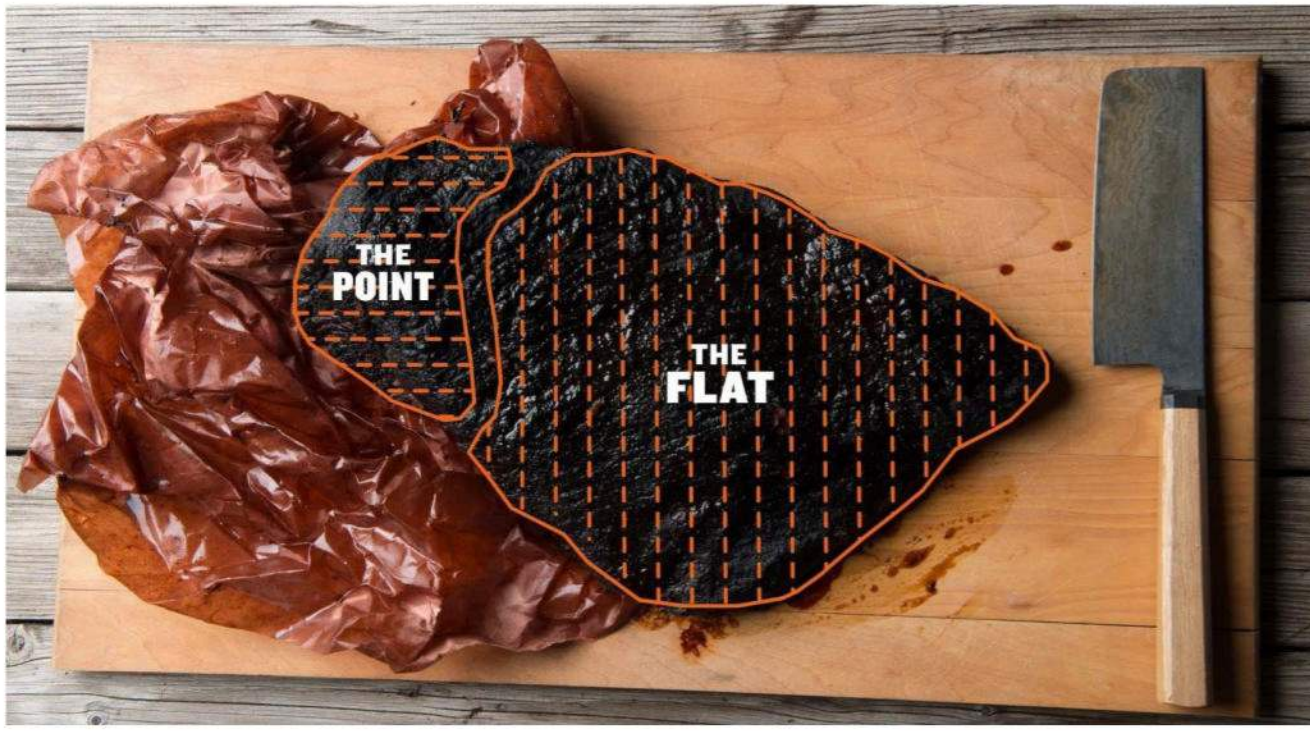
6. Remove the ribs from the grill and let them rest for a few minutes before slicing.

Serve with additional BBQ sauce on the side. Enjoy tender and flavorful BBQ ribs!

Whether you're hosting a backyard barbecue or enjoying a relaxed meal with loved ones, these ultimate summer BBQ recipes will take your outdoor feasts to a whole new level of deliciousness.

THE QUARTER-MILLENNIUM COOKOUT

10 Dishes to Fuel America's 250th Birthday Bash



Listen up. July 4th, 2026 isn't just another excuse to sunburn your shoulders and throw grocery-store hot dogs at a lukewarm grill. This is the big one. The United States of America is hitting the monumental 250-year mark - our Semiquincentennial, if you want to sound like a history professor who moonlights at a cocktail lounge.

A milestone this massive requires an absolute overhaul of your standard backyard menu. No basic burgers. No soggy potato salad. We are talking about legendary, high-octane American culinary masterpieces built to feed a quarter-millennium worth of swagger.

Fire up the charcoal, crack open something cold, and prepare to level up your holiday spread with these ten star-spangled showstoppers.

The Pitmaster's Golden Rule for 2026
A legendary cookout is all about execution. Keep your fire hot, your beer cold, and never, ever press down on your meat with a spatula. Let those juices stay right where they belong. Happy 250th, America.

- The Quarter-Millennium Tomahawk Ribeye
- Red, White & Bourbon Smoked Brisket
- Cast-Iron "Founding Fathers" Hot Chicken
- Liberty Lobster Rolls (Connecticut Style)
- The Declaration Deli Sandwich
- Firecracker Grilled Street Corn (Elote)
- Coast-to-Coast Clam Bake Platter
- Sweet Liberty Jalapeño Poppers
- The All-American Cast-Iron Apple Pie
- The Semiquincentennial Spiked Lemonade

THE QUARTER-MILLENNIUM TOMAHAWK RIBEYE

Forget slider patties. A 250th birthday demands caveman energy.

Grab a 40-ounce, bone-in Tomahawk ribeye.

Crust it heavily with coarse sea salt, cracked black pepper, and espresso dust.

Reverse-sear it over hickory wood until it hits a perfect, bloody medium-rare.

Slice it thick, leave the bone on the platter.

Watch your guests fight like 1776 revolutionaries for the first bite.

FIRECRACKER GRILLED STREET CORN (ELOTE)

You need a side dish that packs as much punch as the grand finale firework show. Take sweet summer sweet corn, char it directly over the open flame until black blisters form, then slather it in cotija cheese, lime zest, smoky chipotle crema, and a final dust of hot chili powder.

It’s messy, vibrant, and impossible to eat just one.

Visual Check: The perfect 4th of July corn should look vibrant; bright yellow kernels, charred black spots, stark white cheese, and a dusting of crimson spice.

RED, WHITE & BOURBON SMOKED BRISKET

Texas brisket is proof that America knows how to handle a challenge. For the big 2-5-0, inject a prime packer brisket with a blend of rich beef stock and top-shelf Kentucky bourbon.
Smoke it low and slow for 14 hours over post oak until the bark is darker than a midnight sky over Boston Harbor. The smoke ring should look like a neon neon-red halo of pure freedom.

Slicing a brisket can trip up even experienced cooks because a brisket isn't just one muscle; it's two completely separate muscles stacked on top of each other.

The Pro-Slicing Procedure
Use a sharp 12-inch scalloped or granton-edge slicing knife and follow the steps below.

Find your baseline: The Pencil Trick.
Before you smoke your brisket, take a quick peek at the raw meat to see which way the grain runs on the flat. Cut a tiny corner off the edge of the flat perpendicular to that grain. Once it's cooked and dark with bark, that little missing corner serves as your indicator mark for where to start slicing.
Slice the Lean Flat: Start at the thin end.
Lay the brisket flat on your board. Start slicing at the thin end of the flat, cutting slices roughly the thickness of a pencil. Work your way inward, cutting perpendicular to the grain lines you can see.
Identify Intersect: Where the muscles overlap
About halfway through the brisket, you will hit the point where the thick Point muscle is sitting right on top of the Flat, separated by a layer of unrendered fat. Stop slicing across.
The Split Method: Separate Point from Flat.
Cut the remaining unsliced chunk completely in half right where the point starts. Take the Point section and rotate it 90 degrees. Because the grain changes direction here, rotating the piece allows you to keep slicing straight down while automatically cutting against the new grain of the Point.
Slice the Fatty Point: The money pieces.
Now that the point is rotated, slice it into pencil-thick pieces. These will be incredibly juicy and marbled. Alternatively, you can cube this section up, toss it in extra rub and sauce, and put it back on the smoker for an hour to make legendary burnt ends.

The Bend Test: To know if you nailed the cook and the slice, pick up a slice of the flat by its ends and drape it over your finger. It should bend easily under its own weight without breaking, but pull apart cleanly with a gentle tug. If it crumbles, it's overcooked; if it's tough to pull apart, it was either undercooked or sliced with the grain.

CAST-IRON “FOUNDING FATHERS” HOT CHICKEN

Give a nod to the South with a mountain of Nashville hot chicken fried right in a screaming-hot cast-iron skillet. The secret is lard, a heavy hand of cayenne pepper, brown sugar, and a touch of smoked paprika. Serve it over thick-cut white bread, the bread will catch all the spicy, seasoned oil dripping off the bird, turning it into the best part of the meal. Top the chicken with a stack of sour dill pickle chips and serve immediately while the crust is roaring crisp. It’s loud, it’s chaotic, and it’s beautifully intense; just like early American politics.

The recipe on the next page captures the intense spirit and fiery flavor of this 250th-anniversary dish. The “Founding Fathers” Hot Chicken rests in its rugged cast-iron skillet, still glistening with that powerful, molten cayenne paste and spiced oil.

This isn’t your average Sunday night fried chicken. Inspired by the legendary hot chicken of Nashville, this recipe uses a screaming, hot cast-iron skillet to fry the bird to a perfect golden crisp, followed by a heavy application of a spiced oil paste that hits like a firecracker. The secret to keeping the meat incredibly juicy while handling the high heat of cast-iron frying is a 24-hour buttermilk brine.

THE GROCERY LIST

The Bird & The Brine

• 3 lbs bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs and drumsticks
(Thighs and drums handle cast-iron frying best without drying out)
• 2 cups buttermilk
• 2 tbsp pickle juice
(The secret weapon for extra tang and tenderizing)
• 1 tbsp hot sauce (Crystal or Louisiana)

The Dredge

• 2 cups all-purpose flour
• 2 tsp sea salt
• 1 tsp black pepper

The Founding Fathers Hot Paste

• 3 tbsp cayenne pepper
(Reduce to 1.5 tbsp for "medium" heat)
• 1 tbsp dark brown sugar
(Crucial for balancing the heat)
• 1 tsp smoked paprika
• 1 tsp garlic powder
• ½ tsp sea salt

For Frying & Serving

• Beef tallow, lard, or peanut oil
(Enough to fill your 12-inch cast-iron skillet about 1 inch deep)
• Thick-cut white bread and dil pickle chips for serving

THE COOKING PROCESS

The 24-Hour Bath: Day Before.

In a large bowl or zip-top bag, whisk together the buttermilk, pickle juice, and hot sauce. Submerge your chicken pieces completely. Seal it up and leave it in the fridge for at least 12 hours—but 24 hours is the sweet spot.

Double Dredge 30 minutes before frying

Pull the chicken from the brine, letting the excess drip off. Whisk your flour, salt, and pepper together in a shallow dish. Dredge each piece of chicken thoroughly in the flour, dip it back into the buttermilk brine for a split second, and coat it in the flour one more time. Let the coated chicken rest on a wire rack for 15 minutes to let the crust set.

Heat the Skillet: 15 minutes.

Place your 12-inch cast-iron skillet on the burner and add your frying fat (tallow or oil) until it's 1 inch deep. Heat it over medium-high until a clip-on thermometer reads 350°F (177°C).

The Fry: 15-18 minutes.

Carefully lower 3 to 4 pieces of chicken into the oil fat-side down. Don't overcrowd the pan, or the oil temperature will drop and make the crust greasy. Fry for about 8 to 10 minutes per side, turning once, until the crust is a deep golden brown and the internal temperature hits 165°F (74°C) for white meat or 175°F (79°C) for dark meat. Move to a clean wire rack to drain.

Mix the Hot Paste: 2 minutes.

While the chicken drains, whisk your cayenne, brown sugar, smoked paprika, garlic powder, and salt into a heatproof bowl. Carefully ladle ½ cup of the screaming-hot frying oil straight from your cast-iron skillet into the spices. Whisk vigorously. It will bubble up and turn into a dark, fragrant, molten paste.

Paint the Bird: 1 minute.

Using a pastry brush, paint the hot spice paste generously over every square inch of the fried chicken. Alternatively, use tongs to dunk the chicken pieces directly into the oil paste for maximum heat injection.

THE SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL SPIKED LEMONADE

You're going to get thirsty manning the pit. Batch out a cocktail that hits like a freight train but goes down like silk. Mix fresh-squeezed lemon juice, pure cane sugar syrup, crushed mint leaves, a splash of club soda, and a heavy pour of American-made rye whiskey. Garnish with a handful of fresh blueberries and raspberries for that subtle, patriotic nod.

This is the ultimate backyard fuel. It looks incredibly refreshing, but the spicy kick of the rye whiskey gives it an authentic, bold American backbone. To yield 20 solid servings (about 6 to 7 ounces per drink before ice), you'll want to prep this in a large 1.5-to-2-gallon drink dispenser or a massive punch bowl.

The 20-Shot Blueprint

The Ingredients

- 4 cups (32 oz) High-Proof American Rye Whiskey (Think Rittenhouse or Bulleit Rye for that spicy punch)
- 5 cups (40 oz) Freshly Squeezed Lemon Juice (Roughly 25–30 medium lemons. Do not use the green plastic bottle stuff if you respect your guests)
- 3.5 cups (28 oz) Mint Simple Syrup (Recipe below)
- 4 cups (32 oz) Club Soda (For a clean, crisp carbonation)
- Visual Garnishes: 2 pints fresh blueberries, 2 pints fresh raspberries, 2 sliced lemons, and 1 bunch of fresh mint sprigs.

THE EXECUTION

Make the Mint Simple Syrup: Do this 2 hours ahead.

In a saucepan, combine 3.5 cups of sugar and 3.5 cups of water. Bring to a simmer until the sugar completely dissolves. Turn off the heat, throw in a large handful of fresh mint leaves, cover, and let it steep for 20 minutes. Strain out the leaves and chill the syrup in the fridge.

The Base Mix: 1 hour before party.

In your large drink dispenser, combine the chilled mint simple syrup, fresh lemon juice, and the rye whiskey. Stir vigorously to combine.

Add the Patriotic Color: 30 min before party.

Dump half of your fresh blueberries, raspberries, and lemon wheels directly into the liquid dispenser. They will float and infuse the punch with a subtle berry undertone while looking wildly festive.

The Final Spark: Just as guests arrive.

Pour in the chilled club soda right before serving to give the cocktail its refreshing effervescence. Give it one gentle stir so you don't pop all the bubbles.

HOW TO SERVE IT

The Golden Punch Rule: Never put ice directly into the main dispenser or punch bowl. It will melt over the afternoon and turn your premium cocktail into watery disappointment. Instead, set out 12-ounce cups packed with fresh ice. Have guests ladle or pour the cocktail over their ice, and top each glass with a few fresh berries and a slapped mint sprig for that killer aroma.

BONUS TIP: ICE. We're Talking About ICE. ICE. (*in the tone of Allen Iverson*)

Nothing ruins a premium backyard cocktail faster than standard, cloudy refrigerator ice that melts in four minutes flat. If you want your Semiquincentennial Spiked Lemonade to stay ice-cold without turning watery, you need mass and clarity. Here is how to dominate the ice game for your backyard bash.

Directional Freezing Cooler

(For Ultimate Clarity)

This is the holy grail of DIY clear ice. By using a cheap, insulated cooler inside your freezer with the lid off, you force the water to freeze from the top down only (directional freezing). All the air and impurities get pushed to the bottom 20% of the block, leaving the top 80% crystal clear.

Prep the Cooler: 5 minutes.

Grab a small, clean, insulated hard-sided cooler (like a 9-quart Igloo) that fits inside your home freezer. Take the lid off completely - you won't need it.

Fill and Freeze: 24 to 30 hours.

Fill the cooler with warm tap water (or distilled water for even better results) leaving about 2 inches of headspace at the top. Place the open cooler flat into your freezer.

The Timed Pull: Crucial Timing.

Pull the cooler out before it freezes solid - usually around the 24-to-28-hour mark. You want the top 3 to 4 inches to be frozen solid, with liquid water still trapped underneath.

Harvest the Block: 10 minutes.

Turn the cooler upside down over a clean cutting board in your sink. Let it slide out. Use a serrated bread knife or a clean wood chisel and a mallet to score the ice, then gently tap it to split the block into crystal-clear, hand-cut 2-inch cubes.

LIBERTY LOBSTER ROLLS (CONNECTICUT STYLE)

Nothing says “East Coast luxury” like massive chunks of fresh, sweet claw meat drenched in warm, melted clarified butter. Ditch the cold mayo for this milestone; we’re serving them warm inside top-split brioche buns toasted to a golden brown on the flat top. Top with fresh chives. It’s sophisticated, rich, and unapologetically dominant.

COAST-TO-COAST CLAM BAKE PLATTER

Bring the rugged spirit of the Pacific and Atlantic coasts straight to your picnic table. Steam up a massive pot of littleneck clams, PEI mussels, jumbo wild-caught shrimp, and spicy andouille sausage chunks in a broth of craft pale ale, garlic, and Old Bay seasoning. Dump it directly onto a butcher-paper-lined table and let everyone dive in with their hands.

SWEET LIBERTY JALAPEÑO POPPERS

A little heat keeps the party moving. Hollow out fresh jalapeños, stuff them to the brim with a blend of sharp Wisconsin cheddar, cream cheese, and crisp scallions, then wrap them tightly in thick-cut, applewood-smoked bacon. Grill them over indirect heat until the bacon is dangerously crispy and the cheese is molten lava.

THE DECLARATION DELI SANDWICH

Think of the ultimate Italian-American grinder, then double the muscle. We're talking shaved prosciutto, spicy capicola, Genoa salami, and fresh mozzarella piled high on an artisanal baguette. Drizzle it with a high-grade red wine vinaigrette and wild oregano. It's a tribute to the beautiful melting pot that kept this country moving for two and a half centuries.

THE ALL-AMERICAN CAST-IRON APPLE PIE

You can't toast 250 years without a slice of pie, but we are skipping the flimsy glass baking dish. Bake a deep-dish Granny Smith apple pie directly in a well-seasoned cast-iron skillet. The bottom crust caramelizes in butter and brown sugar, creating a crispy, rich base. Serve it warm with a massive scoop of vanilla bean ice cream and a drizzle of salted bourbon caramel.

How To Attract Women With Your Ride

By Teddy Field

For our readers twenty-five and under, a special column for you while you sow your royal oats.

In the wild, male peacocks fan their brightly colored tails, then strut around to attract females (much like those Fast & Furious tuner car guys). Since men don't have brightly colored tail feathers, it's not uncommon for them to use their cars as an extension of themselves. By strutting their personalized ride, they hope to attract the attention of the opposite sex. If done correctly, this automotive mating dance can have a terrific effect on their sex life. If done poorly, women will laugh and make little dick jokes behind their back.

Rule #1 Know who you are... and rock it!

Confidence is the key to attracting women. If you don't know this by now you either don't read the Kandy interviews with the models or you are a virgin, which would explain why you are a virgin. Anyhow, women want a man who is exactly as he appears, no matter what look he's rocking. So, if you like trucks, accessorize your truck to fit how you use it. For example, off-road enthusiasts can trick out their rigs with a nice set of terrain tires, wrapped around a tasteful set of functional rims. If you must install a lift kit to clear obstacles out on the trail, make sure that you don't jack it up to the sky. Keep it at the height you need, that way your truck will be easily accessible to her.

And for the love of God, don't put an 8-inch lift and ginormous tires on a big diesel luxury truck, or a dually. You know you're never going to take that heavy-ass coal-rolling monster off road, and it makes you look like a poser who's compensating for something. If you like the outdoors, build a truck that you can take her outdoors.

Rule #2 Don't be a showoff

Let's say you're from the city. You hate mosquitos. And you have no idea why someone would willingly slather themselves in deer piss, climb to the top of a tree, then sit there freezing their ass off in the vain hope of shootin' somethin'. If that makes sense, then perhaps a performance-oriented type of vehicle would better suit you.

When selecting such a car, don't just pick something flashy to impress the girls. Pick something you will love driving. Also, make sure the car fits your lifestyle. For example, if you occasionally need cargo and passenger room, then have a look at a hot-hatch like the 210-hp Volkswagen Golf GTI, or the full-size tire-shredding Chevrolet SS. Women love men who have the confidence to drive something fun. But you must avoid obnoxious trim like massively oversized chrome wheels, huge rear wings, loud exhaust, stripes / decals, and neon paint colors (this includes "Fire Engine Red"). Such garish garnish screams "Micro Penis!".

If you really want to attract women with a sports car, make sure that you come-off as confident and mature. Not a needle-dick attention whore.

Rule #3 Temper creativity with restraint
Okay, if you're into the tuner car, hot rod, rat rod, or restomod scene, you've got to temper your creativity and self-expression with a little restraint. If you're rocking a '93 Civic...with $50k in mods, a Viper-powered Chevy Vega, or a '68 Camaro with gold-flake green paint and an exhaust note that can be heard on Mars, women are going to think that you're irresponsible and too self-absorbed to give them the attention they want. You might find girls (particularly in the tuner car world) that are into the whole expensive custom car thing. But they'll most likely have taste that you can't afford. Like that nitrous-powered Civic, you'll have fun for about an hour, then something expensive will go wrong.

Stereo equipment is another area that you should 'tone down'. A great sounding stereo shouldn't rattle your license plate. It shouldn't leave her deaf after the song's over (you won't be able to whisper how sexy she is). And you don't need a trunk full of speakers, because there won't be enough room for all her stuff when you take her on that romantic getaway (seriously, women take a lot of shit when they travel).

But no matter how cool your ride is, don't talk her ear off about it. Most women are only interested in a car's aesthetics and its fun factor. If your automotive tail-feather shaking happens to reel in a honey, don't get nervous and geek out about your VTEC setup, approach and departure angles, or quarter-mile times. Women love to be the center of attention, so focus on them. Ask questions, then listen. A girl will let you know what she wants as long as you're paying attention.

Rule #4 Think ahead
A young couple was about to get married, but the woman's sister had a "thing" for her future brother in-law. Shortly before the wedding, the groom had to stop by the sister's house to pick up the wedding invitations.

She met him at the door wearing nothing but a t-shirt. So, buddy turned around and high-tailed it toward his car. As he rounded the garage, his fiancé and future in-laws were standing there clapping. "That was a test, and you passed baby!", said the man's teary-eyed girlfriend.

The moral of this story:
Always keep your condoms in the car.

SWEETER SIDE OF LIFE

Kandy